



Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

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Julie Whitman

August 4, 2020

Dear PRINCIPAL/SUPERINTENDENT:

As you may be aware, your school has been selected to participate in this year's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The State Department of Health, State Department of Education, and the Commission on Improving the Status of Children are pleased to provide support for the CDC's YRBS to ensure a healthier future for youth nationwide and strongly encourage your school's participation.

Our state and our schools strive to identify risk factors and develop solutions to address the concerns our students face. The information collected by the YRBS is *essential* for program planning and policy development at the local, state, and national level. It provides data to educators, mental health professionals, medical providers, and many other organizations who provide youth services right here in Indiana. The YRBS is vital to the development of effective prevention and intervention strategies that directly impact the youth enrolled in schools across our state.

The YRBS is a component of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System developed by the Division of Adolescent and School Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in collaboration with more than 800 representatives from federal, state, and local agencies. This system monitors priority health risk behaviors, including those contributing to unintentional injuries and violence, suicidal ideation, alcohol and tobacco use, asthma, and obesity among youth and young adults. New for 2021, the YRBS will provide critical insight into Adverse Childhood Experiences such as trauma, racism, and abuse our children might be experiencing in their lives. The YRBS is the only consistent data we have on adolescents' thoughts, behaviors, and attitudes on their health and well-being.

We cannot collect this vitally important data without you, your staff, and your students. Please join the scores of other administrators across Indiana willing to provide the time and space to help us shape the future of the health and well-being of Hoosier youth.

Thank you for your commitment to Indiana students and for your attention to this essential source of information for our state and nation.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jennifer McCormack
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dr. Kris Box
Indiana State Health Commissioner

Julie L. Whitman, MSW
Executive Director, Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana